

# Paris Committee on Capacity-building (PCCB)

## Call for submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders: Experience, good practices and lessons learned related to enhancing the ownership of developing countries of building and maintaining capacity

### Background

The PCCB aims to address gaps and needs, both current and emerging, in implementing capacity-building in developing country Parties and further enhance capacity-building efforts.

Current priority areas are:

- a) Enhancing coherence and coordination of capacity-building under the Convention;
- b) Identifying capacity gaps and needs, both current and emerging, and recommending ways to address them;
- c) Promoting awareness-raising, knowledge- and information-sharing and stakeholder engagement.

To learn more about the work of the PCCB, you can access its annual reports and other documents [here](#).

### Topic for submissions

As part of its continuing efforts to respond to these priorities, the PCCB determined in its 2021-2024 workplan, to make a call for submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders on:

*Experience, good practices and lessons learned related to enhancing the ownership of developing countries of building and maintaining capacity.*

### Submissions form

We thank you in advance for filling out this template with concise, evidence-based information and for referencing all relevant sources. There are 2 sections in this template:

- *Details about your organization*
- *Guiding questions about implementing NDCs and national development plans in developing countries*

### How will the inputs be used?

The inputs will feed into upcoming deliverables under Activity B.3 of the 2021-2024 PCCB workplan, including a technical paper in 2022, a technical session at the 5th Capacity-building Hub in 2023, and recommendations to the COP and CMA.

### Further information:

You are welcome to provide any other information that your organization thinks would highlight suggestions made in response to this call for submissions.

Address for submission: [pccb@unfccc.int](mailto:pccb@unfccc.int)

Deadline for submissions: 30 November 2021

Please only fill out sections that are relevant to the work of your organization. Please note that no section is mandatory.

### Organization or entity name:

COP26 Catalyst

### Type of organization:

Please choose as appropriate:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intergovernmental organization                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Development bank / financial institution                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UN and affiliated organization                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-governmental organization   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International network, coalition, or initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> Research organization   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional network, coalition, or initiative                 | <input type="checkbox"/> University/education/training organization                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public sector entity                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Private sector entity   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Development agency   | <input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropic organization  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) <a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a> |

### Organization Location

City: Steyning

Country: United Kingdom

### Scale of operation:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Global | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local             | <input type="checkbox"/> Subregional   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National          | <input type="checkbox"/> Transboundary |

### City(ies)/Country(ies) of operation (if appropriate):

Adaptation Fund

Center for Clean Air Policy (CCAP)

Climate Focus Climate

Vulnerable Forum & V20

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

Germanwatch

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI)

Government of Angola

Government of Antigua and Barbuda

Government of Bangladesh

Government of Costa Rica

Government of Lebanon

Government of Malawi

Government of Sweden

Government of the Cook Islands

Greenhouse Gas Management Institute (GHGMI)

Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT)

International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

KliK Foundation

NAP Global Network  
Overseas Development Institute (ODI)  
Oxford Climate Policy  
Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement (PATPA)  
Perspectives Climate Group  
Southern Voices on Adaptation  
Southsouthnorth  
The Eastern Africa Alliance on Carbon Markets and Climate Finance  
The West African Alliance on Carbon Markets and Climate Finance  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
World Resources Institute (WRI)

## Experience, good practices and lessons learned related to enhancing the ownership of developing countries of building and maintaining capacity.

Enhancing country ownership of capacity-building, is a topic that the PCCB has explored from the start as part of its mandate. Article 11.2 of the Paris Agreement notes that capacity-building “should be country-driven, based on and responsive to national needs, and foster country ownership of Parties, in particular, for developing country Parties, including at the national, subnational and local levels.” Parties and other stakeholders in the UNFCCC process have variously noted that a lack of country ownership and local leadership is a key cause behind existing capacity gaps and constraints in developing countries.

Under its new workplan for 2021–2024, the PCCB will collate, review and share information on experience, good practices and lessons learned related to enhancing the ownership of developing countries of building and maintaining capacity, and providing recommendations in this regard.

### **What are good examples of lessons learned and best practices in enhancing country ownership of capacity-building efforts?**

The COP26 Catalyst for Climate Action is a framework initiated by the UK COP26 Presidency and convened by Wilton Park which brings together key stakeholders on capacity building in support of the Paris Agreement to discuss challenges and catalyse action in four key thematic areas: access to finance, transparency and reporting, adaptation communications and participation in carbon markets. In addition to regular meetings of four Action Groups comprising technical experts and partner countries, the Catalyst held a series of regional and global conversations to better understand capacity building challenges faced by developing countries in implementing the Paris Agreement.

This submission draws together salient points raised by Action Group members in their meetings, and hundreds of stakeholders consulted during the 2021 UN Regional Climate Weeks (RCWs) and COP26 Catalyst Global Gathering. Information included here is indicative of wider discussions and examples reflected in the COP26 Catalyst for Climate Action, and the four Action Group Recommendations, both annexed in full. The longer form of recommendations from each Action Group will be published early in 2022 alongside a more detailed narrative report with the overarching evidence gathered.

The following paragraphs cover three thematic areas critical to examples of best practice raised during the Catalyst consultations.

- **ENSURING COUNTRY OWNERSHIP THROUGH LEADERSHIP - LED BY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES:** National leadership should set the agenda for climate action, including local-level ownership and leadership for capacity building. This is because local government and community organisations have more sustained involvement in climate action initiatives and intimate knowledge of the situation at community level which is supported by devolved decision making. Ensuring developing country ownership enables leveraging of synergies between the Paris Agreement and national development strategies, mainstreaming these across all development planning, to embed sustained climate action and optimise limited resources.
  - Empowering local government and sub-national stakeholders to collaborate at all levels will promote ownership and understanding of transparency and reporting across society. During the UN RCW discussions, we heard about the importance of collaboration at the local, regional and national level, for example in data collection.
  - Alongside local ownership of capacity building initiatives, national Government Departments can also have a profound effect on climate action. An example of country ownership raised during the access to finance workstream discussions is the Government of Bangladesh's Department of Finance's establishment of a finance cell

as part of its Climate Fiscal Framework. The aim is to strengthen much-needed climate finance coordination and management.

- **BUILDING PERMANENT INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY:** Capacity should be built within institutions, agencies and organisations to ensure institutional memory, rather than focusing exclusively on building individuals' skills. The importance of institutional capacity building and the value it brings to organisations and their communities should be championed at a local government level and nationally.
  - Capacity building providers should focus on building sustainable intelligence and training that will continue to support the country long after the project is finished. This long-term institutional capacity is especially important for both transparency and reporting and carbon market participation, which require highly technical expertise to implement.
  - In addition to institutions of government, the academic sector - universities, think-tanks and colleges – are well-placed to develop and hold long-term institutional memory, technical expertise and data services. This should be reinforced by national and international networks, such as the LDC Universities Consortium on Climate Change, an official programme of LDC governments based on South-South-North partnership.
  - Institutional capacity can also be enhanced by building networks and creating communities of practice, for example the Adaptation Fund's Community of Practice for Direct Access Entities (CPDAE).
  - Additionally, individual placements can enable capacity-building, for example within climate funds or with donor governments, bringing knowledge gained back to recipient country governments.
  
- **LEARNING BY DOING:** Effective capacity building requires a good understanding of specific capacity needs. These real-world needs can often only be gauged by beginning to implement the provisions of the Paris Agreement. When driving progress in this area, peer-to-peer learning and South-South exchange should be prioritised.
  - For example, the benefit of developing capacity through real-world practice was heard throughout the RCW Catalyst consultations from countries developing Adaptation Communications (ADCOMs), either as a separate entity or within their National Adaptation Plan or Nationally Determined Contribution. Several countries highlighted an increase in institutional capacity through the process of developing an ADCOM, which helped guide countries' prioritisation of critical adaptation initiatives, planning processes and policy development.
  - Many countries also emphasised the value of learning by doing when exploring and developing their participation in Carbon Markets. Governments can study and explore Article 6 crediting methodologies, carbon pricing instruments, and potential sustainable development co-benefits in the abstract, but the necessary frameworks, design elements, and opportunities are often best understood in practice. For example, by engaging in pilot phases (ETS) and pilot projects (Article 6) that bring together the relevant government ministries and stakeholders, it is possible to explore how carbon markets could benefit a country while building both public and private sector capacity for implementation. In the case of Article 6, it should be recognised that cooperation may look different from one country to another, and even small islands can engage and

find opportunities to mobilise finance via carbon markets. In some cases, it is possible to start small, with 'no regrets' activities.

- Countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region also support one another's capacity through peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, collaboration and learning, for example through the Caribbean Measurement, Reporting and Verification Hub. At all RCWs, transparency and reporting experts emphasised the power of peer-to-peer networks and knowledge exchange.

### In your experience, how can country ownership of capacity-building efforts best be ensured and enhanced?

The following recommendations for how country ownership of capacity building efforts can best be ensured and enhanced are taken directly from the COP26 Catalyst's Call to Action, and the specific recommendations from the four Catalyst Action Groups. Each high-level recommendation from the Call to Action below is then accompanied by specific examples from the Action Group recommendations. Please see these annexed Catalyst documents for more information.

- **TAKING A WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY APPROACH:** Capacity building initiatives should facilitate a broad range of global, national and local actors to participate in needs assessments, design and implementation. Taking a whole-of-society approach can unlock the potential of civil society, universities, the private sector, and local communities - with gender and social equity at the heart of all capacity building efforts.
  - **CAPACITY BUILDING FOR TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING:** Governments and capacity building providers should support whole-of-society participation in the transparency process. This includes statistical agencies, finance and economic departments, academia, non-governmental actors, sub-national governments, and the private-sector – all of whom can contribute to and enrich data gathering for climate reporting. It is particularly important to involve stakeholder groups historically not represented in government, as well as those whose primary focus is not climate change.
- **BUILDING SUSTAINED POLITICAL WILL:** Highlighting the multiple benefits that enhanced capacities can bring across our societies and economies, beyond the sphere of climate action, can help to build political will to raise the profile of capacity building. Political will needs to be reinforced by strong integration of institutional commitment and participation, which will help to mobilise resources and deliver key national policies and strategies.
  - **CAPACITY BUILDING FOR CARBON MARKETS:** Raising awareness of the benefits of international carbon markets drives political will, as a precondition for effective capacity building. Awareness raising and demonstration activities are immediate short-term actions that help turn political interest into political will for engaging in carbon markets. Technical staff could be trained to assess opportunities and risks, to then communicate benefits to national decision-makers. This helps to mobilise and mainstream Article 6 capacity building through policies and in key institutions, ensuring sustainable, country-driven interest in carbon markets participation.
  - **CAPACITY BUILDING FOR TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING:** Governments need to significantly raise the profile and visibility of climate transparency and recognise its additional benefits, to help policymakers and citizens understand that transparency is not simply a technical exercise. Transparency and reporting will offer broad benefits across our economies and societies. Coordinating agencies need communication strategies that highlight domestic and international opportunities, and that engage ministers and other political actors. Emphasising linkages with other national priority issues can help to build or strengthen political will and national ownership – which will

be vital to ensuring each country builds their own effective transparency framework. Strong engagement with the reporting and review processes under the current measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) framework will identify capacity gaps and needs ahead of the transition to the ETF.

- ENSURING NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS MAINSTREAM CLIMATE CAPACITY ACROSS DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: Capacity building for climate action should be mainstreamed across all development planning by leveraging and pursuing synergies between the Paris Agreement and national development strategies. Capacity building efforts (systemic, human, and institutional) should focus not only on the ministries and departments that directly deal with the UNFCCC, but also comprehensively include the ministries, departments, and stakeholders of all the key vulnerable and enabling sectors; local governments; and local stakeholders, including in particular the most vulnerable, women, Indigenous communities, and youth. Key sectoral government ministries and departments related to adaptation, both at the national and sub-national levels, should invest in long-term capacities to, inter alia: understand the sector-specific impacts of climate change at all levels; climate-proof sectoral plans and activities; identify and prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable, marginalised, and disenfranchised communities and groups within the sector; track and report sectoral spending on adaptation; and assess sectoral financial need for adaptation.
  - CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ADAPTATION: The specific capacity needs of National Focal Points (NFPs) and climate change departments in the context of ADCOMs relate, among other things, to: accessing funds to produce ADCOMs; planning, implementing, and sustaining an inclusive and integrated process for producing ADCOMs; engaging sectors and stakeholders in the preparation of ADCOMs to ensure a truly inclusive process; embedding and integrating the process of producing the ADCOMs into other national adaptation processes; communicating and socialising the information contained in the ADCOM back to sectors and local stakeholders; and using the ADCOMs to generate political and stakeholder support at the national level, and adaptation finance at the global level.
  - CAPACITY BUILDING FOR TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING: Continuous reporting requires a strong institutional framework, which in some cases will need new legal mandates. All countries can better harness existing institutions (and create new institutions where necessary) to mainstream climate reporting across government, civil society and the private sector. New advice, guidance and support will be needed to help countries build robust institutional arrangements to meet ETF requirements. With support, governments should plan to set up sufficient capacity to operate transparency frameworks and focus the use of external support on creating the physical, institutional and knowledge infrastructure. Capacity building providers can offer support to national institutions involved in data collection, sharing, archiving and reporting. Relationships between data providers need to be strengthened, creating networks of technical experts across contributing institutions. Training should build upon existing infrastructure in order to integrate climate reporting, and to provide data management guidance and tools.
- INCREASING SUPPORT FOR KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE: Countries with similar challenges and contexts can benefit immensely from peer-to-peer learning and exchange among climate practitioners, and especially from greater opportunities to hear from leading voices in developing countries. Providers should appraise existing knowledge exchange initiatives and find ways to strengthen mutual learning, including by improving the accessibility and salience of online resource hubs.

- CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ACCESS TO FINANCE: Organise a forum for climate and development finance providers to start a dialogue between providers, at the level of governing bodies, and recipients of climate finance. This dialogue would address the fragmentation of the current model of climate finance provision and try to reach agreements on how to balance the priorities, objectives and needs of both providers and recipients of finance, and its implications for capacity building. It would also promote buy-in from providers and recipients for other recommendations included here.
  - CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ADAPTATION: Local governments need resources and capacity to invest in, inter alia: understanding the localised impacts of climate change on sectors, stakeholders, and local development efforts; gather disaggregated data; identify the most vulnerable and prioritise their needs; engage with key stakeholders on a sustained basis; track and report local progress, needs and gaps on adaptation; assess local financial needs; access funding; and report on funding received for adaptation.
- ENABLING COLLECTIVE CONVERSATION: There is no single best solution to many of the challenges in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, so stakeholders need support to have stronger collective conversations and develop their own solutions. Knowledge-sharing platforms and peer-to-peer networks need sufficient resources to enable this to happen.
- CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ADAPTATION: Establish regional and national knowledge platforms for peer-to-peer learning and support, such as South-South platforms, hotlines, and buddy systems.
  - CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ACCESS TO FINANCE: Promote peer learning for access by strengthening existing communities of practice, particularly South-South networks, and expanding their work including through coordination between them. This work could build on the work of the PCCB Network.
- PROVIDING LONG-TERM SUPPORT: Support needs to move from project-based to programmatic approaches, be sustainable and take a long-term perspective. Focusing on building capacities at an institutional level ensures that capacities continue to evolve and strengthen over time. Programming should aim to avoid the use of ‘fly in, fly out’ international consultants - true capacity building fosters the capacities of in-country experts and encourages longer-term capacity improvements. Initiatives to reduce ‘brain drain’ and foster knowledge retention at the level of national and sub-national institutions should be developed.
- CAPACITY BUILDING FOR CARBON MARKETS: Build local and regional carbon market expertise. Capacity constraints through the limited number of government experts has slowed the ability to implement carbon market activities in interested countries, while the responsibilities and tasks of carbon market regulators are increasing further. Additionally, the accumulation of carbon market expertise in the Global North has increased the costs of implementation. Ensuring the long-term availability of government experts as well as developing local and regional expertise, in cooperation with research institutions, industry, finance and business associations, is crucial for the sustainability of carbon market action. Localising expertise through capacity building benefits a wider group of stakeholders and thus contributes to inclusive, gender-sensitive outcomes, including through bringing business and employment opportunities.
  - CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ACCESS TO FINANCE: Address the “brain drain” in developing countries, through a stronger focus on the institutional and systemic levels by: strengthening developing countries’ national institutions that can build capacity in a sustainable manner, including universities, research centres, etc., as well as regional



centres; strengthening the organisational capacities of relevant institutions to create, retain and transfer the knowledge acquired and created; supporting the review of procurement processes and manuals, to ensure the hiring of more national experts when external services are needed; addressing incentives to retain personnel. Addressing the brain drain requires the engagement of developing countries' governments, as well as that of the different providers of capacity building, in line with the type of support they provide.

### What are key challenges (incl. e.g. knowledge and institutional barriers and capacity gaps) with regard to effectively enhancing country ownership of capacity-building efforts?

The high-level challenges set out below summarise some of the most prevalent issues raised in the COP26 Catalyst's Call to Action and the four Action Group recommendations. Please see the attached documents for more details and suggested ways to overcome these barriers.

#### - **Barriers at the donor and/or multilateral level**

- **OVER-STANDARDISATION:** Some capacity building initiatives remain wedded to a 'one-size-fits-all' approach that offers similar interventions in countries with very different needs.
- **SHORT-TERMISM:** Lack of long-term commitments to interventions can hamper buy-in from recipient countries and can prevent investment in the institutional and human capacity required to achieve country ownership of processes.
- **IDENTIFICATION OF CAPACITY GAPS:** At times donors lack the capacity to accurately identify what gaps might exist within a country. This can lead to interventions which are sub-optimal.
- **ONEROUS PROCESSES:** Many countries participating in the Catalyst consultations stressed that they lack the human, financial and technical resources to fulfil donor requirements. Donor coordination is needed to facilitate less onerous application and onboarding processes to access capacity building support.
- **LACK OF AWARENESS OF EXISTING SUPPORT:** Existing capacity building initiatives to support countries are often not always widely known or accessible.

#### - **Barriers at the national level**

- **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:** Institutional arrangements and cooperation between organisations at a national level can be difficult to achieve.
- **BRAIN-DRAIN/RETENTION ISSUES:** Even when capacity is built individuals often subsequently move to a different job, division or country, leaving a gap in institutional knowledge. This can be especially prevalent at sub-national level.
- **DATA COLLECTION:** The infrastructure to collect accurate data and manage it sustainably in an accessible archive is lacking in many countries. Digitisation, which would bring a more sophisticated approach, is a fundamental need and will aid coordination in preventing duplication and inefficiencies.
- **PROFILE AND POLITICAL WILL:** There is a perceived lack of willingness and engagement of stakeholders at the national level whose primary focus is not on climate change to engage with processes related to the Paris Agreement. This was seen to be particularly the case on transparency and reporting, coupled with the absence of legal mandates and domestic legislation to underpin broader participation.

### Useful sources:

*Please give examples of useful sources relevant to this topic  
(e.g. webpages and portals, publications, fora, organizations working on this issue)*

- COP26 Catalyst for Climate Action - Call to Action: <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Wilton-Park-COP26-CTA-11.11.21-pages-v2.pdf>
- Recommendations for Transparency and Reporting: <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Wilton-Park-COP26-Transparency-and-Reporting-FINAL-1.pdf>
- COP26 Catalyst for Climate Action: Recommendations for Access to Finance: <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Wilton-Park-COP26-Access-to-Finance-FINAL.pdf>
- COP26 Catalyst for Climate Action: Recommendations for Adaptation Action (on Adaptation Communications): <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Wilton-Park-COP26-Adaptation-Communication-FINAL.pdf>
- COP26 Catalyst for Climate Action: Recommendations for Participation in Carbon Market: <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/COP26-Catalyst-recommendations-on-Participation-in-Carbon-Markets-1-Nov-2021.pdf>

**Open comment:**

The COP26 Catalyst for Climate Action is grateful for the contributions from a huge range of global stakeholders in the development of practical solutions to key capacity building challenges.